

# European Respiratory Society Annual Congress 2012

**Abstract Number:** 3420

**Publication Number:** 3093

**Abstract Group:** 1.2. Rehabilitation and Chronic Care

**Keyword 1:** COPD - management **Keyword 2:** Chronic disease **Keyword 3:** Rehabilitation

**Title:** Living with COPD: Psychological distress among family carers

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**Body:** The impacts of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in terms of patients' psychological distress have been well reported. However, COPD also poses several challenges to family carers, as they represent a primary source of support to patients. Yet, the burden of COPD in terms of family carers' psychological distress remains relatively unexplored. This study aimed to assess the presence of anxiety and depression symptoms among family carers. A cross-sectional study was conducted with 110 family carers of patients with COPD, in the central region of Portugal. A structured questionnaire based on ICF-checklist was used to collect socio-demographic and subjective health status data; Depression and anxiety were measured with the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS). Descriptive statistics and  $\chi^2$  tests were applied using PASW Statistics 18.0. Participants' mean age was  $59.99 \pm 12.33$  years old and were mainly female ( $n=87; 79.1\%$ ). The majority were spouses ( $n=75; 68.2\%$ ) and caring for more than 4 years ( $n=66; 60\%$ ). 67.3% of participants presented anxiety symptoms, 37.3% depression symptoms and 28.2% presented both. Subjective mental health was significantly associated with anxiety ( $p=0.001$ ) and depression ( $p=0.001$ ). Subjective physical health was significantly related with depression ( $p=0.001$ ). No other statistically significant associations were found. Caring for a patient with COPD can impact negatively on the psychological health of family carers. Similar results have been shown in the context of other chronic conditions, such as cancer, dementia or stroke. The results highlight the need of supportive interventions tailored to the particularities of DPOC caregiving in order to prevent burden among family carers.